

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 4 and 9 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nickum (2001/0039195) and further in view of Hawkins et al. (U.S. 6,516,202) and Usui (2002/0025839). Claims 5, 7, 8, 10, 13 and 14 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nickum and further in view Hawkins et al. and Nakai (US 6,928,567). Claim 17 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nickum and further in view of Hawkins et al. and Wang (2003/0013506). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

For all of the reasons set forth in the Applicants' previous response to the Examiner's Office Action letter, it is believed that for the same reasons, all of the above claims are patentably distinct from the prior art references relied upon by the Examiner. However, in an effort to expedite the prosecution of the present application, the claims rejected by the Examiner have been deleted from the present application.

The Examiner has also indicated that claims 2, 6, 11, 12, 15 and 16, although objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, as the Examiner will note, claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2 and correspondingly claim 2 has been cancelled from the present application. Claim 5 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 6, and correspondingly claim 6 has been cancelled from the present application. Additionally, claim 9 has been amended to include allowable subject matter of claim 11 and correspondingly claims 10 and 11 have been cancelled from the present application. Claim 12 has been cancelled from the present application and replaced with newly added claim 18 which reflects a combination of claim 9 and claim 12. Claim 13 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 15 and correspondingly claim 15 has been cancelled from the present application. Claim 19 has been added to the present application, claim 19 reflecting a combination of claim 13 and claim 16, and

correspondingly claim 16 has been cancelled from the present application. Additionally, claim 17 has also been cancelled from the present application.

Since all of the claims objected to by the Examiner have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, it is now believed that the present application containing claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, 13, 14 and newly added claims 18 and 19 is in condition for allowance and thus reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Joseph A. Kolasch

Registration No.: 22,463

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant